

SEARCH REQUEST FORM

Scientific and Technical Information Center

70041

Requester's Full Name: THACH BUI Examiner #: 76945 Date: 6/27/02
 Art Unit: 3628 Phone Number 305-0063 Serial Number: 09/002,276
 Mail Box and Bldg/Room Location: CPK 7, 7X12 Results Format Preferred (circle): PAPER DISK E-MAIL

If more than one search is submitted, please prioritize searches in order of need.

Please provide a detailed statement of the search topic, and describe as specifically as possible the subject matter to be searched. Include the elected species or structures, keywords, synonyms, acronyms, and registry numbers, and combine with the concept or utility of the invention. Define any terms that may have a special meaning. Give examples or relevant citations, authors, etc, if known. Please attach a copy of the cover sheet, pertinent claims, and abstract.

Title of Invention: elec converging billing system

Inventors (please provide full names): Sue Crum, et al.

Earliest Priority Filing Date: _____

For Sequence Searches Only Please include all pertinent information (parent, child, divisional, or issued patent numbers) along with the appropriate serial number.

Combine Searches

What's his story?
 Story

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Type of Search

Vendors and cost where applicable

Searcher: _____	NA Sequence (#) _____	STN _____
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DIALOG(R)File 148:Gale Group Trade & Industry DB
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08283166 SUPPLIER NUMBER: 17597979 (THIS IS THE FULL TEXT)
Concentra and i2 Technologies to integrate sales configuration with global supply chain management; Product configuration recognized as critical link in intelligent global supply chain management.

Business Wire, p10101141

Oct 10, 1995

LANGUAGE: English RECORD TYPE: Fulltext

WORD COUNT: 497 LINE COUNT: 00051

TEXT:

Corp. (Nasdaq: CTRA) a leading supplier of sales and engineering automation software announced today that it will be integrating Selling Point, Concentra's laptop-based sales configuration and proposal generation product, with i2's Rhythm 3.0 Global Supply Chain Management Solution.

Working jointly, Concentra and i2 plan to further simplify product integration as part of i2's Partners Excellence Program.

Rhythm 3.0 is a breakthrough solution to global supply chain management that views the total supply chain as a single entity and allows for concurrent planning of manufacturing and distribution in real time, taking all constraints into consideration. This holistic approach allows forward thinking manufacturers to effectively meet customer needs while realizing cost savings from improved supply chain management.

"Selling Point is the ideal complement to Rhythm because it brings the entire manufacturing enterprise to the point of sale," said Ken Sharma, senior partner at i2 Technologies. "Selling Point allows the salesperson to configure a customized or highly engineered product in real time during a face-to-face sales call. Selling Point links with Rhythm 3.0 to access "available to promise" delivery dates so salespeople can make accurate delivery commitments at the point of sale."

Selling Point uses high-level objects to model how and why a product is configured. This customer needs based approach allows salespeople to:

- o Generate product configurations based on high-level customer requirements and preferences while the system automatically ensures compatibility of choices.
- o Generate product configurations based on geometric constraints such as space and fit requirements.
- o Generate realistic three dimensional (3D) custom product configurations.
- o Generate sale proposals and quotes by automating product outputs (e.g., price estimates, custom product graphics), and linking to major wordprocessing packages and enterprise data sources.
- o Generate accurate order fulfillment information (e.g., engineering drawings and Bills of Material)

Selling Point's open architecture is designed for easy integration with enterprise applications such as engineering and manufacturing systems, contact managers, opportunity managers and marketing encyclopedias. "The integration of Selling Point and Rhythm 3.0 delivers a unique tool for companies to manage product flow from customer needs assessment through final delivery," said Lawrence Rosenfeld, Concentra's CEO and chairman. "This powerful combination of technologies and supporting methodologies will enable companies to gain tremendous competitive advantage by meeting goals of customization with lower costs and faster response times."

About i2 Technologies

Founded in 1988, i2 Technologies is the leader in supply chain planning and scheduling solutions that provide improved responsiveness and customer satisfaction at the lowest possible cost. The firm is headquartered in Dallas, Texas and maintains offices across the US, Europe

and Asia.

About Concentra

Concentra Corporation is the leading provider of object-oriented sales and engineering software solutions. Using Concentra's software, market-leading companies worldwide in the aerospace, automotive, industrial equipment and construction industries are creating customer-driven product designs, product configurations and sales proposals in minutes, not months. Headquartered in Massachusetts, the company maintains offices across the US, Europe and Asia.

CONTACT: Concentra Corp, Burlington

Janet Page, 617/229-4669

or

i2 Technologies, Dallas

Melis Jones, 214/888-4112

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COMPANY NAMES: Concentra Corp.--Product development; I2 Technologies Inc.

--Product development

INDUSTRY CODES/NAMES: BUS Business, General

DESCRIPTORS: Computer software industry--Product development

PRODUCT/INDUSTRY NAMES: 7372204 (Engineering, Mfg Software Pkgs)

SIC CODES: 7372 Prepackaged software

TICKER SYMBOLS: CTRA

FILE SEGMENT: NW File 649

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DIALOG(R)File 148:Gale Group Trade & Industry DB
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FILE SEGMENT: NW File 649

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DIALOG(R)File 148:Gale Group Trade & Industry DB
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09820630 SUPPLIER NUMBER: 19848265 (THIS IS THE FULL TEXT)
Putting it all together: Has one-stop shopping arrived? (telecommunications
services bundled with telecom equipment) (includes related article on
bundled services currently available) (Industry Trend or Event)(Cover
Story)

Flanagan, Patrick

Telecommunications, v31, n10, p34(4)

Oct, 1997

DOCUMENT TYPE: Cover Story ISSN: 0278-4831 LANGUAGE: English

RECORD TYPE: Fulltext; Abstract

WORD COUNT: 3358 LINE COUNT: 00267

ABSTRACT: Deregulation and competition in the local and long-distance
telecom markets promised 'one-stop shopping,' but such convenience is still
a dream despite the fact that nearly every service provider now touts it
heavily. An ideal model for one-stop shopping would be a single global
provider or integrated carrier bundling all forms of voice, data,
multimedia and wireless services. Numerous administrative, regulatory and
other hurdles block the chance of any company being able to offer such
bundles. User skepticism and resistance to change are significant problems;
only 21 percent of executives in one poll favor obtaining all services from
the local exchange carriers (LECs). The Telecom Act of 1996 has failed to
deliver true competition, and providers cannot yet bundle services for
lower prices than in the past. Administrative issues include the difficulty
of presenting a single bill for multiple services. Experts are not betting
on any particular business model when forecasting who will emerge as the
leader in one-stop shopping.

TEXT:

It is virtually impossible to find a telecom service provider today
that's not touting a "one-stop shopping" plan of one sort or another. The
concept is both logical and timely: Why deal with multiple carriers,
particularly now that the Telecommunications Act of 1996 will supposedly
allow long-distance and local exchange carriers to get into each other's
businesses? Yet, true one-stop shopping is nowhere near to becoming a
reality. The road between where the industry is today and where it could
and should go is a bumpy one indeed.

Before reviewing the current state of one-stop shopping for telecom
services, a universal definition is needed. The ideal model is a single
global provider, or an integrated carrier, that bundles all forms of
services, including switched voice, TV programming, wireless, multimedia,
Internet access, and highspeed data. (Some have even referred to these as
"super carriers.") Also in that mix should be value-added services such as
virtual voice and data networks, multiple forms of services and facilities
outsourcing, and equipment management down to the desktop. The available
one-stop shopping infrastructure provides traffic transport over a variety
of media, including fiber optic, VSAT, digital wireless, hybrid optic
coaxial cable, radio, and twisted pair transmission facilities. The
reliability in terms of uptime is 99.9 percent for all types of services.
Not to be forgotten is administration. Not only is unified billing a
reality for all types of services, but integrated services providers
deliver it in an electronic format that adds significant value to the
bundle of services purchased.

1 One reason for the bumpy road is latent user skepticism. One might
2 think that telecom managers would be among the strongest supporters of
3 one-stop shopping as a way of simplifying their jobs. This isn't
4 necessarily the case. The idea of having a single carrier for both local
5 and long distance apparently does not sit well with members of the
6 Communications Managers Association (CMA). In a Telecommunications,
7 magazine survey conducted last year (September 1996, pp. 3741), 66 percent
8 of respondents rated d& option as not important. When ranking the factors
9 used in making a decision on selecting a carrier, only 6 percent saw a
10 single source for local or long distance as "most important." Survey
11 respondents gave numerous reasons for their reluctance to buy into the
12 one-stop shopping concept. One who uses nine local exchange carriers (LECs)
13 and experiences problems put it this way: "If they can't provide good local
14 service, why would we buy long distance from them?" Another said, "There's
15 just too much uncertainty about how all of this new competition is going to
16 work out in practice."

17 A similar survey by Deloitte & Touche Consulting Group showed that
18 only 21 percent of executives spending at least \$5 million a year on
19 telecommunication favored LECs as their one-stop shopping vendors.
20 Seventy-five percent said they would go with their long-distance
21 interexchange carrier as a single source of telecom services. Jennifer
22 Taylor, head of communications consulting for Price Waterhouse's
23 Entertainment, Media, and Communications Group (San Francisco), says
24 corporations are "less concerned about one-stop shopping than they are
25 about getting the best deal, easy service provisioning, and management
26 information. Their buying criteria are totally different from residential
27 consumers." In fact, according to a recent Price Waterhouse/Kenan Systems
28 Communications Preference Survey, 55 percent of residential subscribers say
29 they prefer to buy not only telephone, but also television services from
30 one company. Preference for one bill for all services was even stronger,
31 with 69 percent expressing interest. Respondents also held a much higher
32 opinion of LECs than the telecom professionals, with more than 80 percent
33 giving LECs an "excellent" or "good" rating.

34 One message emerging from both businesses and the general public to
35 telecom providers is that as customers, they will be demanding buyers.
36 "Certainly the companies are going to go price shopping. As competition
37 heats up, there are going to be tremendous price choices," says Frank
38 Slavik, a TeleChoice analyst. Many buying decisions will be made on billing
39 procedures, with the nods going to those that offer one bill for services.
40 "We've known people have wanted this for a long time," Slavik says. Here,
41 the edge goes to the long-distance carriers. "The local providers have not
42 fared as well as the long-distance companies in providing easy-to-read
43 bills," he says.

44 There are firm large bumps in the road to one-stop shopping:

45 * Regulatory. Just how long it will take local and long-distance
46 carriers to get into each other's businesses is anyone's guess. The recent
47 Bell Atlantic foray into long distance is promising. But until this happens
48 on a wider basis, true one-stop shopping is stymied.

49 * Administration. Legacy back office billing and reporting systems
50 leave the existing players in need of costly upgrades. New providers have
51 an advantage.

52 * User Resistance. Getting telecom managers to change their attitudes
53 is a major marketing challenge. Conventional wisdom advises never putting
54 all of one's eggs into one provider's basket.

55 YOU CALL THIS "REFORM"?

56 Until the regulatory bumps are smoothed out, the debate over one-stop

1 shopping is little more than a debate. The Telecommunications Act of 1996
2 is not delivering in terms of turning telecom providers into aggressive
3 competitors able to bundle services for lower prices and improved
4 performance. "This law has been a disaster," says Sen. John McCain
5 (R-Ariz.). Since it was signed into law in February 1996, less than .5
6 percent of U.S. subscribers have gained access to competitive local
7 service, according to the Yankee Group (Boston, Mass.). With the exception
8 of Bell Atlantic, not one RBOC has, in the judgment of regulators, opened
9 its calling area market to the degree that it can be permitted to compete
10 with long-distance carriers. When the Act was passed, AT&T vowed to be a
11 major player in local exchange service, providing such service in all 50
12 states and having a third of the market share in five to 10 years. Right
13 now, it offers very limited local calling in only six states: California,
14 Connecticut, Georgia, Illinois, Michigan, and New York.

15 Critics of the new law view the major telecom providers as choosing
16 to make love, not war. This includes Nynex and Bell Atlantic, SBC
17 Communications and Pacific Bell, and for a short time before it was
18 aborted, AT&T and SBC. All want to join forces, not compete. The FCC is
19 insistent that they allow rivals into their businesses before merging. The
20 Bell Atlantic/Nynex \$23 billion marriage is a good example of the
21 complexities of creating a competitive marketer out of a monopoly. The
22 \$23.7 billion merger was held up by the FCC because it wanted guarantees,
23 which following a year-long investigation by the U.S. Justice Department's
24 antitrust division. Resolution of the conflict came from an array of
25 concessions that FCC Chairman Reed Hundt called "more than compensation for
26 the loss of Bell Atlantic as a potential competitor in the Nynex region."
27 Included in these concessions, most of which were aimed at removing
28 technical barriers, are agreement on how competitors would access the Bell
29 Atlantic/Nynex infrastructure, pricing based on forward-looking costs
30 rather than embedded costs, and methods for tracking how the merged RBOCs
31 are treating rivals. A key component is a uniform electronic system for
32 ordering services and switching customers.

33 While this action is good for one-stop shopping, at least for the 13
34 states in the Bell Atlantic/Nynex calling area, it does not clarify how
35 other markets will be opened to competition. The day before this agreement
36 was reached, an appellate court in St. Louis sharply limited the FCC's
37 right to set terms on the pricing and connections conditions for
38 competitors to local phone carriers. The three-judge panel said the FCC
39 "trampled on the states' rights" to carry out key elements of the Act. This
40 a major victory for the RBOCs and GTE because it prohibits the FCC from
41 imposing deep discounts on network connections for their competitors. "The
42 states are in charge of setting wholesale prices," said William Barr, the
43 former attorney general who argued the case for GTE. The FCC's Hundt said
44 an appeal is planned based on the ruling being inconsistent with the
45 mandate and intent of Congress. "We cannot believe the Congress intended to
46 have 93 district courts and 12 appeals courts and the Supreme Court
47 deciding over the next five years what based on costs' or other language
48 means," Hundt said.

49 All this legal and regulatory wrangling results in more roadblocks to
50 integrated carriers trying to emerge as sources of one-stop shopping. The
51 same can be said of charges by the RBOCs that the long-distance carriers
52 are resisting entering the local business as a means of keeping them out of
53 the long-distance business. Costs are factors, too. MCI recently announced
54 that losses from trying to provide local phone services this year would be
55 \$800 million, or double what was previously estimated.

56 Open competition will become a reality, "but it will happen a lot

1 slower than anyone wanted," predicts Taylor of Price Waterhouse. "It's very
2 hard for regulators to get out of the business of regulation, even though
3 they say they haven't put up any barriers." The ultimate winners in the
4 race to offer one-stop shopping will be the carriers who are the most
5 aggressive in offering bundled services to their corporate customers. "They
6 have to not violate regulations, while also not using regulations as an
7 excuse for not being aggressive," she says.

8 FULFILLING THE BILLING

9 Another bump in the road to one-stop shopping is in the form of
10 administrative problems -- presenting a single bill for multiple telecom
11 services. In the back offices of the established carriers, particularly the
12 RBOCs, there are many legacy billing system issues that will take time to
13 resolve. Bob Kiburz, vice president of strategy and planning for Kenan
14 Systems Corp. (Cambridge, Mass.), has seen firsthand the challenges in this
15 area, since his company is a supplier of convergent billing systems. "Bill
16 consolidation is a good start that accelerates a carrier's move toward
17 one-stop shopping," he says. The newer providers, such as competitive local
18 exchange carriers (CLECs) and cable companies, "have a real advantage (over
19 established carriers) by not having these legacy system problems," he adds.

20 The administrative implications of delivering one-stop shopping go
21 far beyond upgrading some legacy billing systems. What telecom managers
22 really want from their providers is a single point of contact for all
23 administrative aspects of services. In particular, this includes routine
24 changes and upgrades in services, and strategic forecasting and reporting.
25 The term coming into use in the industry is "customer care," which covers
26 most back office aspects of providing and managing bundled communications
27 services.

28 The demand by business customers for this single point of contact
29 requirement will drive the upgrading of back office operations. "They want
30 to be able to call in and talk with someone who can adjust their service,
31 handle inquiries about billing, talk about new products, and have access to
32 all parts of the vendor organization," says Kiburz. A key benefit in the
33 single point of contact administration is that it greatly reduces, if not
34 eliminates, finger pointing when something goes wrong.

35 Convergent billing and order management software and systems are now
36 available to resolve the back office problems of established carriers.
37 Still, few are making this a priority; inertia and investments in legacy
38 systems are the primary reasons. According to Kiburz, "Dynamics unrelated
39 to the technology are the sticking point."

40 This gives the CLECs and cable companies a distinct window of
41 opportunity. Corporations are beyond the early adapter phase when it comes
42 to doing business with CLECs such as Teleport and MFS (now part of
43 WorldCom) as a way to drive down costs without jeopardizing operating
44 efficiency. From a regulatory point of view, they have, the advantage of
45 being able to offer both local exchange and long-distance service now,
46 while the RBOCs are months -- or years -- away. GTE is in a niche, being
47 able to offer both local and long distance, but is similar to the RBOCs in
48 terms of back office operations.

49 The RBOCs are expected to take two to three years to install updated
50 back office systems, while the CLECs have set January 1, 1998 as their
51 deadline for having advanced billing and order management systems
52 operational. "Even if you take away the regulatory issues (limiting access
53 to new markets), the CLECs can have a year jump on the RBOCs," says Kiburz.

54 RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

55 The resistance of established telecom providers to modernizing their
56 back offices is only the beginning in terms of resistance to change.

1 According to the Communications Managers Association survey, telecom
2 managers are reluctant to change as well. Few will openly admit that they
3 resist change, but many are leery of putting all their eggs into one
4 provider's basket: 37 percent of survey respondents indicated that they
5 would not be likely to switch local service to a long-distance carrier,
6 while 10 percent foresaw such a change as highly likely. The matter of
7 ordering long distance from a local carrier generated a similar response,
8 with 64 percent indicating they would not be likely to switch.

9 Carriers' lack of experience in offering competitors' services had a
10 large impact on CMA membership. Joan McCarthy, a communications analyst for
11 defense contractor AIL Systems (Deer Park, N.Y), said that for now she
12 "wouldn't give them a chance without some time-in-service performance
13 data." Another source who requested anonymity said that cellular and cable
14 companies are "a bit scary" as local access providers. He recommended that
15 they first prove they can deliver reliable service to the home market
16 before approaching business users.

17 There is no surefire way of overcoming such entrenched lethargy in
18 the marketplace. Competition will pressure the established telecom
19 providers to modernize, while savvy end users will put pressure on their
20 in-house telecom providers to add new services and consolidate those they
21 have now. "The individual residential consumer is also a corporate
22 consumer, particularly when working at home," says Price Waterhouse's
23 Taylor. "When I go into Lotus Notes at night and do on-line research from
24 home, I'm every bit wearing my corporate hat." If her carrier negatively
25 affects her ability to do business at night, she says, "I'm a very unhappy
26 camper." This unhappiness will be made known to her telecom department.

27 Telecom managers also need to be aware of all the attention that the
28 so-far nonexistent competition is getting in business publications. "Budget
29 is a large consideration, and any information services group want\$ to show
30 improvement in productivity for level of dollars spent, especially when
31 their CEO is seeing all those articles about competition bringing costs
32 down," says Taylor.

33 AND THE WINNER IS ...

34 When it comes to predicting who will emerge as the leading one-stop
35 shopping providers, the experts are not placing any serious wagers. The
36 consensus is that individual carriers are going to emerge; the CLECs or
37 LECs are not expected to beat out the long-distance carriers or vice versa.
38 Sanjay Mewada, a senior analyst with the Yankee Group, believes that a
39 carrier's success lies in deploying a three-stage strategy: first, offer
40 bundled services second, expand into applications tied to bundles of
41 services: third, solve the corporation's telecom needs on an end-to-end
42 basis.

43 Mewada says that setting up call centers and Web hosting are good
44 examples of this strategy in operation. "One-stop shopping must save money
45 in one form or another, but the value proposition can be complex," he says.
46 An example of this would be a bundle of services that costs the same as if
47 purchased separately, but results in internal savings through ease of
48 administration or reduction in staff.

49 For both telecom managers and providers, the success of one-stop
50 shopping will undoubtedly be based on cost savings in one form or another.
51 "One of the low hanging fruits for reducing costs is to consolidate
52 providers, and clearly there can be more consolidation in
53 telecommunications," says Taylor. "When buying is centralized, as it is in
54 a large corporation, they know better than anyone else how to squeeze
55 vendor margins." Her advice for carriers is to "increase the value
56 propositions to corporate customers." One-stop shopping is the first step

1 in creating greater value for the enterprise's telecom dollars.

2 Getting One-Stop Shopping Now

3 At the present time, the two best sources of one-stop shopping for
4 telecom services are WorldCom and GTE. Both are relatively free of
5 regulatory restrictions, and WorldCom is targeting corporate customers.

6 WorldCom owns and has in place three essential elements: its
7 long-distance voice net, MFS's local net, and UUNet's Internet network.
8 These are bundled as the Internet service, which includes local, long
9 distance and Internet access over a dedicated T1 circuit, and an integrated
10 billing plan. What is lacking is wireless. When asked about savings,
11 WorldCom cites an Atlanta-based user getting a \$.01 per minute savings on
12 long-distance calls and a flat rate of \$45.89 on each local business line,
13 versus \$48.30 from BellSouth -- a 5 percent reduction. UUNet Internet
14 access is \$545 per month (64-kbps port, 32-kbps committed information
15 rate); that is reduced to \$518 on a two-year contract. WorldCom estimates
16 the bottom-line savings to be \$500 to \$700 per month. One drawback is that
17 the company's data network services are not yet integrated into one-stop
18 shopping billing.

19 GTE, long both a LEC and long-distance carrier, received a special
20 exemption from the competitive restrictions placed on the RBOCs and
21 long-distance carriers by the Telecommunications Act of 1996. It already
22 has an extensive local/wireless (29 states) and long-distance (nationwide)
23 network; the acquisition of BBN Corp. provides Internet access. Having a
24 much stronger brand franchise than WorldCom, GTE is better positioned to
25 become a national one-stop shopping provider. The company has announced an
26 integrated carrier business plan, set up its own CLEC to serve business
27 customers, and begun to build out its fiber-based infrastructure. "GTE has
28 the short-term advantage over the RBOCs and the long-distance carriers
29 because it is in both businesses, while they have to wait on the regulatory
30 process to do the same," says Sanjay Mewada, a senior analyst with the
31 Yankee Group.

32 The ability to offer local service is the key to one-stop shopping
33 becoming a reality for AT&T, MCI, and Sprint. All are making efforts in
34 local service, but WorldCom with MSF's ATM-based fiber backbone and GTE
35 with its existing customer base are significantly ahead. Still, it will be
36 a year or more before WorldCom has any significant competition even from
37 GTE. The hope that cable companies and wireless companies will come on
38 strong is now pretty much discounted. Cable providers are focused on
39 residential customers and bypass business areas, and have only a few test
40 customers for all types of telephony services. Wireless carriers are
41 focused on getting digital PCS services up and running and fighting off
42 intense competition in their core business of voice, with little interest
43 in data applications or local loop bypass.

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